

T H E

*Dying Thoughts and last Reflections*

O F

Mr. Thomas Brown,

*Who Departed this Life the 16th of June, 1704.*

In a Letter to a Friend.

*23. Jun. 1704.*

**T**HAT the World may be convinc'd, that they are not impos'd upon, but that the following Letter is Genuine, Mr. Brown's own Sentiments, Written by Himself, and sign'd before several Witnesses, and given into my Hands some few hours before his Departure, with a Request to make it publick after his Death. I think my self bound to attest, in respect to a Friendship that began betwixt us in our Youth (being both brought up at the same School and which has ever since been kept up by a fair Correspondence: As also in Justice to him whom I frequently Visited at the time of his Illness, wherein he often express'd a very great Remorse for the Actions of his Life past, and declared that the short remainder of it should be spent in making the best Provision for Eternity. He often heartily wish'd that all such who might have Imbib'd any ill Notions from his Example, Writings, or Conversation, wou'd be so far convinc'd by his dying Experience, that a Vertuous Life is the best Consolation upon a Sick Bed, and a good Conscience the best Physician; for the rest he recommends them to his last Reflections, which he hoped might prove, in some measure, useful to those who are not yet come to a true Sense of Eternity, and a future Accounts.

*Tho. WOTTON,*

*Curate of St. Laurence Jury, London.*

*Mr. Wotton.*

**I**N all the several Periods of my Life, I have found none so sure and faithful a Friend as your self. I always kindly received your wholesome Admonitions in the time of my Health, and in this my last Illness (which has brought me to the brink of the Grave) you have done all that could be expected from a good Christian, and the most affectionate Friend.

Upon *Tuesday* the sixth of *June*, I sent for you to Communicate to me the Holy Mysteries of the Bleis'd Eucharist, for which I hoped I was sufficiently prepared. You chearfully complied with my demand.

Finding my self totally decayed, that I was certain I cou'd not hold out much longer. I made bold to send for you on *Monday* the 12th of this instant *June*, to administer to me the last Consolation of the Church, her Absolution.

This you cou'd readily grant, you told me, *Provided I answered the Conditions upon which she gave it.*

You

You asked me, *whether I was in perfect Charity with all Mankind.* I answer'd, Yes: Adding, that I had begged their Forgiveness, and that for my own part there was not a Man in the VVorld, whom I did not heartily Forgive, tho' he had Injured me never so much.

That I had paid my Debts, as far as a few Trifles of my own wou'd go, or the Generosity of my Friends enabled me; that this was all I cou'd say upon that point.

Well, but says you, *the greatest difficulty is still behind, you have published several Books, wherein not only the Holy Ministry is ridiculed, but they contain abundance of Prophane Immoral Passages, which have given Publick Scandal.* 'Tis true, the Books are so dispersed and lodged in so many Hands, that now 'tis not in your power to call them home, and consequently this will not be expected from you. But I hope you have most Solemnly repented for the same: To that I answered, Yes. You concluded that I ought to employ all my Interest with the Booksellers concerned, to expunge all Passages that gave a just Offence in the next Editions, which I promised to do, and then you gave me the Holy Absolution.

VVithin a day or two after, Mr. *Briscoe* the Bookseller coming to see me, I conjur'd him to leave out all Prophane, Undecent Passages in my Letters, whenever he came to Reprint them, which he readily promised. The same promise another of the Profession made me with great Alacrity; thus far I have done as you required of me.

By a particular oddness of my Destiny, I have been thought, and represented for a better Man than really I am by some People, and by others for a much worse.

They did not consider, or know that I was too lazy in my Temper to VVrite much, and yet all the Pamphlets Good and Bad, Lampoons, Trips, *London Spies*, and the like insignificant Trifles, were Father'd upon me without any more Examination.

'Tis true, my Feet were deep enough in the Mire, but to have disclaimed every Libel and Pamphlet that was thus undiscernedly Imposed upon me, wou'd have been an endless trouble, and so I sat as contentedly, as I cou'd, under the Scandal.

But I ought to be seriously ashamed, if what has been said of me were true, viz. that my Conversation was Atheistical and Prophane. I will not disown but that over my VVine, I have complied too much with the Libertinism of the Times.

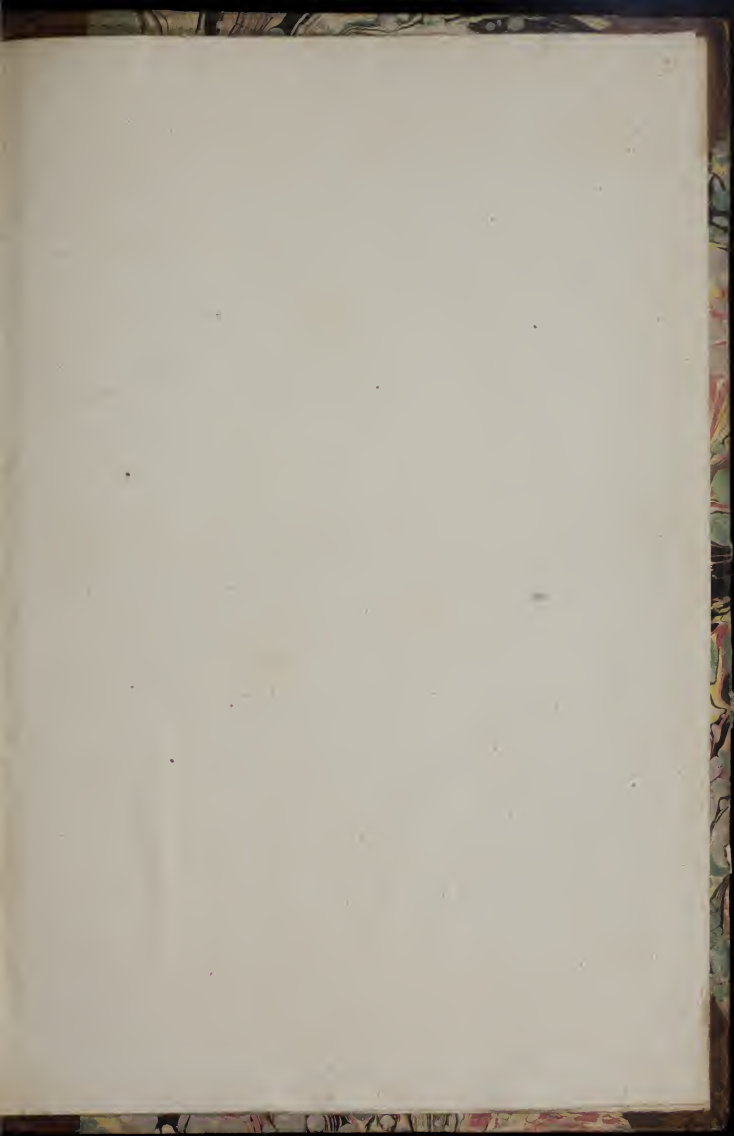
Of those Things which are said to belong to Me, not One in a Hundred are mine: And that I ever encouraged the Loose and Villanous Principles of this Age, I am sure it is out of any Man's Power to prove. I cou'd, out of too much Complacency to a Vicious Age, I have taken too much Freedom in Conversing about the *Universal Flood*, and some other indifferent Matters, to some pleasant Gentlemen, wherein the true Essence of Christianity is not a jot concern'd: But this I can faithfully assure you, that I never once doubted of the Verity of our CHURCH in which I was bred, and in whose Communion (though an unworthy Member) I dye, begging Her Pardon for any Scandalous Reflections that may have been thrown upon Her, or any of Her Ministers, by my VVritings, humbly Recommending my Self to Her Prayers, and my Soul to the Mercies of my Eternal Redeemer, and Merciful Saviour the holy Jesus, who, I hope, will Accept of my late, though sincere, Repentance; who, with the Father, and the holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth one God for ever, Amen.

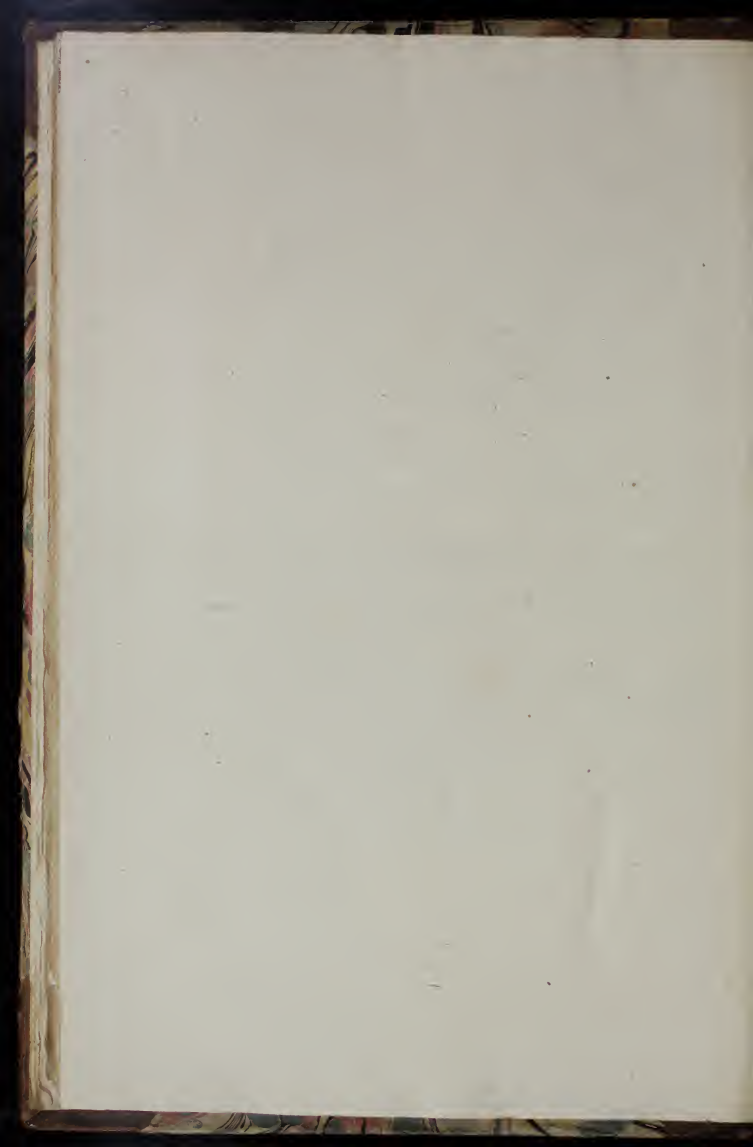
SIR, Be pleas'd to Accept of this small Testimony of my Affection, and the sincerity of my Intentions, who am

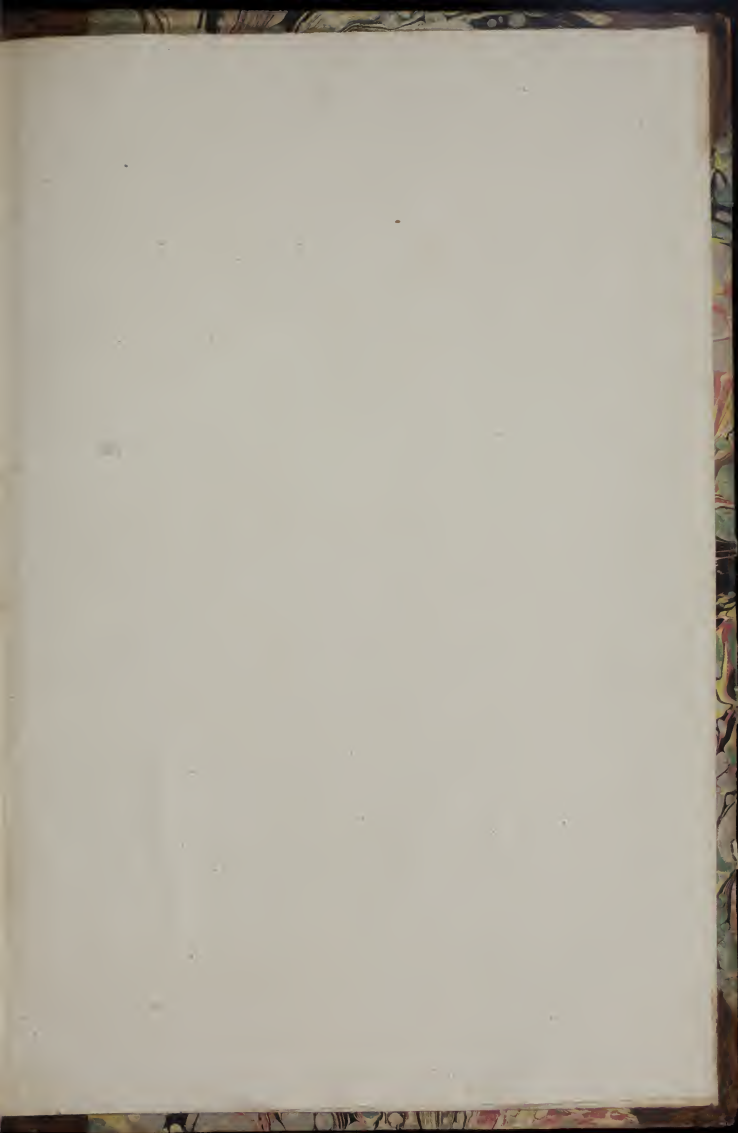
Your obliged humble Servant,

Aldersgate-Street,  
June 16. 1704.

Thomas Brown.







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